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EXHIBIT C

Filed: 07/09/19 of 70 19-30088 Doc# 2907-3 Entered: 07/09/19 13:22:59 Page 1

SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA

COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO

HONORABLE CURTIS E.A. KARNOW, JUDGE PRESIDING

DEPARTMENT NUMBER 304

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COORDINATION PROCEEDING

SPECIAL TITLE [RULE 1550(b)]

CALIFORNIA NORTH BAY FIRE CASES

CERTIFIED TRANSCRIPT

Case No.: CJC-17-004955

Reporter's Transcript of Proceedings
Thursday, October 25, 2018

REPORTED BY:
MARY ANN SCANLAN, CSR NO. 8875 RMR-CRR-CCRR-CLR



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Case: 19-30088 Doc# 2907-3 Filed: 07/09/19 Entered: 07/09/19 13:22:59 Page 2

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1	PROCEEDINGS
2	Thursday October 25, 2018 9:16 a.m.
3	00
4	THE COURT: Good morning.
5	I'm going to go through the topics that I plan
6	to talk about and then I'll start each topic with some
7	questions and comments so that the attorneys in the room
8	can push back and correct me or steer me on those
9	matters. And when we finish our comments on that topic,
10	then we'll move on to the next topic.
11	I'd appreciate a copy, even a rough
12	transcript, of today's hearing. I think it will be
13	helpful, so if somebody can get that to me in the next
14	couple of days or by early next week, that will help me
15	with a case management order to resolve a lot of the
16	issues that we have to talk about today.
17	Because we got started a little late, I'll ask
18	people to not speak quickly but perhaps with fewer
19	words.
20	With respect to the number of trials, I'm a
21	little concerned that we're not focusing on the overall
22	number of trials that might be implicated.
23	Obviously, after we have some of the
24	bellwether cases, there's a thought that mediation will
25	kick in and perhaps we'll get some resolution; but we

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can't put a hundred percent of our bet on that approach.

If there are 15 or 19 fires and if the results from one won't have much effect on the other -- and some of the individual plaintiffs have suggested as much, because of different ignition sources and therefore different ways in which liability is likely to be resolved, then simply having the Tubbs fire first or simply having the Atlas fire first may not push us along toward the other cases and getting those resolved.

But if we do them 60 days or half a year, one after the next, it will be many, many years before these cases get resolved, which doesn't work.

So the current thought from some of the plaintiffs -- many of the plaintiffs and I think -- is that we would have, for example, maybe Tubbs set 60 days after the Atlas fires.

But when you work that out for all of the fires involved, we're still many, many years down the road, so I'm concerned about that.

Before we talk about which particular trial to have first, I'd just like to open up comments with respect to that, whether we should be planning Tubbs or Atlas first and then Atlas or Tubbs next, wait 60 days, wait 90 days, have the next trial, or whether we should really be setting more cases at this point -- a lot of

CALIFORNIA NORTH BAY FIRE CASES 1 cases. Obviously, that will put a tremendous burden 2 on the parties to go -- to essentially be preparing for 3 two, three, four, five trials at the same time. 4 5 And we're not going to resolve this particular issue today, but I think we want to get started thinking 6 about what's the long-term plan here. We haven't thought about this particular issue before, so let me 8 9 just stop there and invite comment. MR. KELLY: So, Your Honor, first of all, I 10 11 think that we agree with the Court that you can't have 12 trials going on forever. 13 We addressed this in response to the questions that were posed, which is which should go first, what 14 15 should it look like, how long would it take? 16 THE COURT: Absolutely. MR. KELLY: I think, just so you know, with as 17 18 few words as possible, we are continuing to do discovery on all of the fires and are certainly willing to come 19

back and talk about what's the most efficient way if that's what moves the needle to further explore with you how many, where, and at what intervals.

We're not wedded to this as the only way to go forward.

I will say that the CMC that we prepared and

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submitted essentially had the universal agreement of all 1 the leads in response to your question, and I quess the 2 short answer is, it's a fair question, it's a good 3 question. Does a trial or multiple trials move the 4 needle or do we need to do five, six, or eight? I think 5 6 that's something we need to come back and talk to you about.

> All right. Thank you. THE COURT:

MR. SIMON: Your Honor, I think that with regard to the plaintiffs' request that Atlas go first, I believe that it would move the needle for other trials because of the vegetation-related issues.

MR. ORSINI: Good morning, Your Honor, Kevin Orsini. I already speak too quickly, so I'll just use few words.

I think Your Honor's concern is exactly the right one. How do we get to this point where we're not trying these cases for the next decade? I think we may very well get to a point where we have to slot a number of trials for a number of different fires, either concurrently or consecutively with less than a 60-day gap, but I think the question goes back to why we believe you have to set Tubbs first.

Right. I'll be getting to that. THE COURT: That's a separate issue.

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But maybe the approach is going to be to set one first, whichever one that is.

MR. ORSINI: If I may, Your Honor, just to expand on that a little bit, the reason why I don't think they're completely separate, at least from our perspective, which is -- you know, from PG&E's perspective about how could we resolve this, because we don't want these cases hanging around for the next ten years either, just as much as the individual plaintiffs who are victims don't.

And from our perspective, as we're looking at how we can size how this ought to be resolved, trying Tubbs first doesn't quarantee that we don't have to have all of those other trials, but it's the best chance that we don't have to have all those other trials.

Because when I sit with my client and we talk about what resolutions could look like, when you're staring down the barrel of one fire that's two-thirds of the potential liabilities, that one has the highest probability of getting all the others tied up in a global resolution.

That's why I don't think they're unrelated.

And I think we could, for example, take an approach where we set the Tubbs trial first for precisely that reason, and then we figure out how to set

a number of additional trials shortly thereafter so that 1 we have a mechanism where, if I'm wrong and trying Tubbs 2 doesn't get us all to the point where we can get this 3 wrapped up without more trials, we have the schedule in 4 place to move right to those trials. 5 6 THE COURT: Thank you. 7 Your Honor, may I offer a MR. SINGLETON: different perspective? 8 9 THE COURT: If you keep your voice way up, 10 yes, you can. 11 MR. SINGLETON: Gerald Singleton. 12 I apologize, Your Honor, I had a flight issue 13 so we were delayed. 14 I think the Court is absolutely right when it suggests that it would be beneficial to set numerous 15 16 trials. We propose, as the Court is aware, Sulphur going in March or April to be followed by the four Wind 17 18 Complex fires. Although it would be aggressive, we have 19 20 circulated to both plaintiffs' counsel and defense 21 counsel a proposed trial plan that would try all of 22 these cases next year. 23 I understand this is not something that the

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Court is going to decide today nor should it, but I

think that looking at some of the other issues,

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particularly the fact that you have people, real world
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     issues, such as ALE benefits running out after two
     years, the proper way to resolve these cases is to set
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     them for trial once the liability is ready to go on each
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          And if we do that, we believe we could get most if
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     not all of them, tried in 2019.
               Obviously, it would be burdensome, but there
     are a lot of fine lawyers on both sides, and we
 8
 9
     certainly believe we could do that.
10
               THE COURT: Did you author the response to
11
     certain individual plaintiffs to the joint case
12
     management conference statement -- you were involved in
13
     that?
14
               MR. SINGLETON:
                               Yes, Your Honor.
15
               THE COURT: How come I didn't get a single CMC
16
     statement? Do you know what happened?
17
               MR. SINGLETON:
                               Yes, Your Honor.
18
               THE COURT: Were you not consulted?
19
               MR. SINGLETON:
                               No, Your Honor. What happened
     is we met and conferred extensively, but there is a
20
21
     fundamental difference of opinion between the four firms
22
     in our group and the plaintiffs' leadership.
23
               THE COURT: Is it possible to get your
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     comments into a single document next time?
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                               We certainly can, Your Honor.
               MR. SINGLETON:
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We were not afforded the opportunity to add it to that, 1 2 but we certainly can if that's what the Court would 3 prefer. I'd prefer it. 4 THE COURT: 5 MR. SINGLETON: Very well. 6 THE COURT: Thank you, very much. MR. SINGLETON: Thank you. My quess is that what we're going 8 THE COURT: to do is set a single trial first, one of these cases. 9 10 We're going to turn to that matter in about one minute. And after we have set that trial but before it 11 12 starts, at a future CMC, we're going to talk about this 13 issue of what happens after that. I want to have a 14 long-term plan. We're not going to wait until that 15 first trial has started. 16 We're going to have a long-term plan before that, whether it's something that the Singleton firm has 17 18 suggested or some other approach, but I think we want to 19 have an idea of what's coming down the road so that PG&E 20 understands what it's facing and so the lawyers who are 21 involved in this case can have a say in how their 22 energies are going to be spent over the next couple of 23 years and really what's feasible and what's not 24 physically feasible. 25 Let me turn to the next topic, which is which

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trial to go first. Let me make some summary comments.

The Sulphur trial has been proposed. Some of the individual plaintiffs suggest this, but they didn't provide enough information for me to do very much with that today. They don't provide a rough number of witnesses available, what their areas of testimony are going to be. I don't think they suggested how long the trial is going to be.

I wonder if it's true, if some people agree that this is in fact the simplest case, at least between Sulphur, Atlas, and Tubbs. Comments on that are solicited.

They have indicated -- the folks that proffer the Sulphur trial, that it involves a lot of people. think that's probably true with Tubbs and Atlas as well.

They have suggested that they think that the discovery cutoff should be pursuant to code. It doesn't sound like the way to go. If there are only a couple of expert witnesses, then perhaps that could be fit in pursuant to code, but probably not otherwise.

The next proposal is the Atlas case. I wonder, is it true that there's a general agreement that this is a tree line contact case, that there is the single point of ignition? There may be obviously disagreements as to who's responsible for that.

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I wonder, can we say that there are, in fact, common ignition sources or source in the Tubbs fire and in the Atlas fire? I think in the Tubbs fire, the consensus probably is that there is not a single ignition source.

In Atlas, I wonder if there is or not.

My concern is, particularly with respect to the Tubbs fire, that we might have ultimate liability as to some of the plaintiffs and not as to others, because we have different ignition sources and it will devolve into a dispute as to really how many fires we have.

So my question there, in summary, is how much of a consensus is there that we have identified ignition points for these two candidate fires, Tubbs and Atlas?

Turning to the Tubbs fire -- this is PG&E's suggestion -- it's noted, I think without dispute, that it's the most extensive fire, it's likely to resolve the most cases. PG&E has suggested that about two-thirds of the liability it faces could be involved in the Tubbs fire.

This makes it an appealing fire to take first because it will resolve most of the cases or at least indicate possible resolution to most of the cases.

But there's also a suggestion that this has the most complex causation issues associated with it.

If that is true, how is it possible that PG&E is right 1 2 that it will actually be a shorter trial than Atlas? I think we generally recognize that this will 3 be a battle of experts and there probably will be a lot 4 5 more experts in Tubbs than Atlas, but I throw that out 6 so that you'll correct me if I'm wrong about that. Do the plaintiffs agree with PG&E that in a Tubbs fire trial they would not have the vegetation 8 9 management-related witnesses that they want in the Atlas 10 PG&E has suggested that only half of the time 11 needed would be applicable. 12 With respect to Atlas or Tubbs or the Sulphur 13 fire, is it true that we would probably have exactly the 14 same issues and potential delay associated with 15 accessing the evidence in the hands of Cal fire, or do 16 we have a different picture for those three fires? For these three fires, Atlas, Tubbs, or 17 18 Sulphur, to what extent do the plaintiffs need the 19 completion of all of PG&E's corporate discovery for all 20 of these trials? 21 Isn't it the same thing, don't we need to do 22 exactly the same work on that front, getting that 23 corporate discovery done, regardless of what fire we 24 take?

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And just to drop a footnote here, perhaps the

1	parties need to set a deadline for the completion of
2	this discovery from PG&E. There's a lot of discussion
3	in the joint case management statement indicating some
4	concern about PG&E's discovery.
5	If the parties cannot set a deadline, maybe
6	they want me to resolve that issue if they are unable to
7	set a deadline for the completion of that discovery.
8	The plaintiffs have suggested with respect to
9	this discovery this applies to all three of these
10	candidate fires, Atlas, Tubbs, or Sulphur that they
11	don't want to set a fact discovery cutoff date. They
12	say that on page 22 of their statement. I find this a
13	little odd.
14	If we're going to set a trial date, don't we
15	need to set a discovery cutoff date?
16	Let me stop there. The general topic now is
17	which fire: Sulphur, Atlas, or Tubbs?
18	And I'm interested in people's views to the
19	extent they haven't been reflected in my
20	MR. KELLY: So, Your Honor, Michael Kelly. I
21	hope I got all the questions.
22	Let me start with these three fires. The
23	leadership appointed in CMO1 went through these
24	questions relative to what should be first.
25	Let me say about Sulphur, it is a pole failure

CALIFORNIA NORTH BAY FIRE CASES

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case; whereas everything else is power line, tree line, or multiple causes of failure. It has no deaths. has a minimum number of structures, 162. For a host of reasons it was determined by the larger group, including subrogation and the public entities, that it was not going to be helpful in moving the litigation forward toward resolution.

Let me talk about Atlas for a minute. There is no question that the Atlas fire is a tree contact or branch contact fire. It is pleaded in our long form complaint. PG&E reported both a branch failure line contact tree collapse into the same line to the PUC; and Cal Fire reported two locations of origin that are both tree contact issues.

So while that doesn't prove liability, it does prove or suggest that there's an easy way to prove causation.

The notion of the Tubbs fire really being the suitable case to try first is undermined by the various arguments in the CMC statement, which I'm sure the Court read carefully of he says, she says, she says, he says about what happened, how many points of origin. And the fundamental problem there is it's going to take multiple experts who can't get to the evidence.

As we've noted late in the CMC statement, we

have worked really hard with the DA's to get an 1 2 agreement on access to evidence. And Ms. Cordova can talk more about it, but 3 the Tubbs report is not out. The Tubbs report is not on 4 5 the table for getting access to Cal Fire evidence 6 because we're dealing with DA's; it hasn't been referred out, it hasn't been finished. There are multiple experts to look at it. 8 It's inconceivable to me that it is tried in a 9 10 shorter period of time or involves less experts or it 11 is, as suggested by the defendants, it's some kind of an 12 on/off switch. It's either at these old folks' home or 13 somewhere else. 14 The truth of the matter is if the total number 15 of points of origin is not clear, in part because we 16 haven't seen all of the physical evidence -- there are multiple experts looking at it -- there's no reason to 17 18 believe that actually the point of origin is as 19 suggested by PG&E. 20 THE COURT: You don't have the same discovery 21

and Cal Fire issues with Atlas?

MR. KELLY: We don't, because the Atlas report is done.

And let me -- actually, we'll get ahead of ourselves, but I think it would be helpful to the Court.

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Here's the status of that. For fires not 1 2 referred to district attorneys, LaPort, Honey, Redwood, Cherokee, 37, and Nuns, we have an agreement to get both 3 reports and access to the evidence with the DA's. 4 MS. CORDOVA: With Cal Fire. 5 6 MR. KELLY: With Cal Fire, excuse me. And we're working with the district attorneys. Cal Fire's position is you get an agreement 8 9 from the DA's. Cal Fire and the district attorneys have 10 agreed to evidence inspections -- the DA's in Sonoma, 11 Butte, Yuba, and Nevada counties, and we're working with 12 the other DA's. We just haven't gotten confirmation for 13 access to the evidence. 14 These are all cases where the report is 15 finished. We are waiting to hear from Napa County 16 district attorney relative to the Atlas fire. But as for the Tubbs fire, the report is not 17 18 finished. A decision about referral or non-referral hasn't been made. It's not even on the table in terms 19 20 of negotiating with Cal Fire and the district attorney 21 to get access to the evidence. 22 And I think one of the things the Court -- I'm 23 sorry to be presumptuous, but the notion --24 THE COURT: Go ahead. 25 MR. KELLY: -- that you want a discovery

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cutoff is to get things finished or moving, we can't even begin to get things finished until we get to that Tubbs evidence.

So as a practical matter, whatever the feelings of the defendant are about how much it might move a needle -- and I'm using might in italics -- it's really something we don't know. It's a moving target. We don't know when the -- I've heard on seven different occasions the Tubbs report is coming out this week. those are seven different weeks over the past five months. And I don't think anybody knows that.

So one of the things I think the Court wants is certainty. We want certainty. So for us, you know, the one thing about the Atlas fire, is it going to move the needle? Well, it's going to move it to the extent that there are wrongful deaths involved, there are more than 50,000 acres, there are more than 700 structures, we do know it's a tree line contact. We know some things that make it capable of assessing and analyzing and getting the experts on.

> Thank you. THE COURT:

MR. KELLY: And if I might, I was responsible for drafting what apparently was an inarticulate CMC statement on our side.

We don't suggest that you should never set a

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general discovery cutoff. We proposed, referencing this
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     fire, a discovery cutoff for the fire that is set.
     was intended to make clear that the discovery cutoff we
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     proposed and the modification as to the expert discovery
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     was peculiar to this fire that's set and said as far as
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     a generic cutoff, we still can't even get ESI.
               If the Court will recall, we were supposed to
     get it on December 21st. This statement now skips the
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     month of January and says we will get it in February and
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    proposes discovery cutoff two weeks later.
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               So we're not adverse, but it's not --
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               THE COURT: Your suggestion is set a discovery
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     cutoff per trial?
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               MR. KELLY:
                           Yes.
                                 That is my point.
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               THE COURT:
                           What do you think about a
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     discovery cutoff for getting evidence which is going to
    be common to all of the cases, I think, which is the
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     corporate discovery from PG&E?
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               MR. KELLY: I agree that the corporate
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     behavior discovery is common. The same company is
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     operating in response -- at least in our opinion,
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     responsible for all the fires.
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               THE COURT: We need to set a single deadline
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     for that, right, at some point?
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                           We do, but I would suggest to the
               MR. KELLY:
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Court that it would be nice to have the
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     electronically-stored information in our hands to review
     for a period of more than two weeks before we can come
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     and chat about what's fair to everybody.
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               THE COURT:
                           Okay.
                           What have I missed?
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               MR. KELLY:
               THE COURT: Not too much.
               MR. KELLY: Okay.
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               So I was always a B student. I feel that
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     having not missed too much, I'm hoping I'm not below a
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     B-minus.
               If there is a major point I missed, I would
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     like to address it.
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               THE COURT: I don't think so. Thank you very
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     much.
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               Let me give the rest of the plaintiffs a
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     chance to talk, then I will turn to PG&E.
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               MR. SIMON: Your Honor, Craig Simon for
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     subrogation plaintiffs. We agree with everything that
     Mr. Kelly said.
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               I want to answer specifically some of your
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     questions.
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               With Atlas, is there general agreement on
     ignition? I believe so. To reiterate what Mr. Kelly
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     said, you have two admitted ignition places in Atlas.
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     In one you have a significant tree branch that contacted
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the line. It was reported by PG&E as a tree branch, so 1 2 they saw it and looked at it and reported it that way. The second ignition is a whole tree down. 3 PG&E reported it that way and, therefore, I believe that 4 it is, by far, a much simpler case than Tubbs. 5 6 I do want to say, with regard to Tubbs, in previous hearings, I might have suggested to the Court 7 that it was an electrical fire only that did not involve 8 vegetation. We've had some discovery since the last 9 10 hearing that has come out which implicates a need for additional evidence collection, that is, that we know 11 12 there was an electrical event at a particular location. 13 The cause of that electrical event is still under 14 review. 15 It could be on the Calistoga line at other 16 places things that are occurring, and one of those 17 things may be vegetation-related. We've had some eyewitnesses and some issues that have come up. 18 THE COURT: Do you think there's a consensus 19 that that is the ignition point for the Tubbs fire, 20 21 whatever the cause is? 22 MR. SIMON: No, Your Honor. I believe that 23 this is extremely complicated and there's no answer.

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forth in the brief -- I think the point that I'm trying

And I agree with Mr. Kelly that the back and

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to emphasize for the Court is Tubbs is the most complex fire that is delayed in any type of discovery by the fact the evidence is tied up and it's different than Atlas.

You asked specifically, isn't access to the evidence, is it the same or different? That was a question that you asked -- don't you have the same problem with the Cal Fire? No, it's completely different.

In the Tubbs there is no report or final conclusion, and PG&E affirmatively went out and extended the time for Cal Fire to make a report.

So by PG&E's volitional efforts, they have delayed or allowed a delay in the Tubbs report. I'm not blaming them. I'm just saying it as a fact that we don't have a report and, therefore, the chance of getting the same type of evidence with regard to Atlas is completely different.

We believe we're going to be able to get to the -- what we need to see is the conductor in Atlas, and we have certain other outage reports, so it's completely between Tubbs and Atlas with regard to that.

Mr. Kelly dealt with a deadline of discovery. We, of course, want a deadline if we're in a trial, but we don't want a deadline for the other fires.

And you asked specifically if Sulphur was the 1 2 simplest case. In a way it is the simplest case and that's part of the reason why we were saying that it 3 could be used after the first trial if we can't get to 4 In other words, we may be in a situation where 5 6 four months from now we still don't have a Tubbs report, and we would need to have another fire go forward and we said in the brief that maybe that other fire would be 8 Sulphur. 9 Your Honor, subrogation completely supports 10 11

what Mr. Kelly said and the individual plaintiffs.

THE COURT: Thank you.

Are there other plaintiffs who have a completely different view as to what I've been hearing? Thank you, Your Honor. MR. SINGLETON:

I would concur with what Mr. Kelly and Mr. Simon said in terms of how the trial how the discovery cutoff should work. I think it should be per trial. Discovery should go forward on the others.

Following up with what Mr. Simon said, I think all parties agree that Sulphur is the simplest. It is a pole that snapped. There are no vegetation management There do not appear to be the same issues that arise when you have a line slap, which can create separate issues.

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So in terms of simple, I do believe there is large consensus it is the simplest.

I wanted to address two points that the Court raised. Number one, do we need the ESI to try Sulphur? Certainly we would like it. In a perfect world we would have that, but I think there's a difference between what you need and what you would like when you're going to trial.

In terms of Sulphur, we believe that once we're allowed to actually inspect the evidence so we can confirm what our experts have posited and what they've theorized, we will be largely ready to go. There will be a handful of other depositions that will need to be taken, but this is going to be a much more streamlined straightforward case. We estimated it would take 13 to 17 court days to try, and that's assuming that there were five to ten cases involved. If the Court wanted to strip that down, we could cut that back even further.

But the timeline that we've suggested also addresses one issue I haven't heard yet today and that is that of the preference cases. We have, unfortunately, at least eight individuals in Sulphur who we believe will qualify for preference under section 36(a); and this is not something we take lightly, but these are individuals who are over the age of 70 who are

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very ill and for whom we will need to file those motions relatively soon. That was why we had suggested the March/April trial date, because we think that would coincide with when these cases will be ready.

The last issue I wanted to address was something that Mr. Kelly said about Sulphur not moving settlement forward, and I think that depends on what the settlement in this case is going to look like.

Obviously, PG&E has said and they've been consistent throughout that they want a global settlement that involves all fires. Having represented, I believe, more individuals in fire cases than anyone else in California, and certainly having been involved in many major fires over the last few years, I have not seen that happen in a multiple-fire case.

There's many reasons for that. One is the fact that the liability is very different. For example, in the 2007 San Diego fires, there were three separate fires, all of which were very large. I think the smallest was about 40,000 acres.

But we had over a year where we were settling cases in two of them, but the third one was not settling because there were issues related to liability.

I can see the same thing arising here. have a case like Sulphur where -- again, obviously this

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is our position and PG&E may differ, but it's a fairly straightforward case.

You have a case like Tubbs, where I think all parties agree that's going to be a complicated case, and certainly there are going to be differences in terms of the strength of liability.

So I would simply say that I don't see this case, at least at this point, as being able to be resolved on a global order anytime soon.

I think what makes the most sense is to treat these the way that I believe Mr. Orsini and Mr. Kelly have both commented on. These are not one size fits It's not one case. It's 16, 17, 19 -- it depends on how you quantify the fires. There can be a little bit of difference of opinion, but there's certainly at least 16 major fires here, and I believe they have to be approached on an individual basis, and that's why it makes so much sense to set them as they are ready to try.

When you have a case like Sulphur that is the simplest, I would submit it makes very little sense to put it behind a much more complicated -- a super trial, if you will, with an Atlas or a Tubbs.

If Sulphur can be ready to be tried in March or April, why not try it?

1	The same is true of the Wind Complex fires.
2	Those are the Lobo, McCourtney, Cascade, and LaPort. We
3	have the reports in two, and my understanding is there
4	have been agreements with the Nevada County District
5	Attorney where these occurred to go ahead and inspect in
6	Lobo and McCourtney.
7	I'm the discovery coordinator for the
8	plaintiffs in the Lobo and McCourtney fires, and based
9	upon what I've seen, there's no doubt in my mind we can
10	be ready to go in those fires by May or so.
11	So to me, what makes the most sense is you set
12	these when they're ready. If the Court adopts that
13	approach, then you have the Sulphur case tried in March
14	or April, with liability established, and then you have
15	the Wind Complex cases, which are four all together
16	tried in May.
17	Again, liability would be established,
18	assuming we're successful, and that would not in any way
19	interfere with the Atlas case.
20	THE COURT: I'm going to ask you to
21	terminate just give me your final thoughts.
22	MR. SINGLETON: Sure. Yes, Your Honor.
23	All I would say is we would respectfully
24	submit that these be set when they are ready to be
25	tried. Thank you.

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THE COURT: Let me turn it over to PG&E. 1

MR. ORSINI: Thank you, Your Honor.

So I think there are a number of things that Mr. Kelly and Mr. Simon and also Mr. Singleton said that are just factually not true.

There has been a lot of suggestion that there's some broad consensus that Atlas is a vegetation case, that it involves tree line contact, that we know that, it's simple.

I want to be very, very clear PG&E does not agree with that. We did submit incident reports to the CPUC that there was vegetation that contacted our lines, but that does not say anything about whether or not that vegetation caused a fire.

For example, one of the two locations is a location where we believe all of the evidence very strongly establishes that the tree that fell because it burned and after the lines were already deactivated.

We do not believe either of those locations were where the fire started. So I just want to be clear about that, because there's been a lot of suggestion that there's broad consensus about what the facts are in Atlas.

There's the argument Atlas is simple because we have basically a single point of origin and Tubbs

complicated because there might be multiple points of 1 2 origin. Again, that's not true. What we know is at least Cal Fire has said 3 there are two origin points for Atlas. So as I said, I disagree with both of those, but Cal Fire has identified 5 6 two different locations, so Atlas will already involve at least those two spots and, we believe, others. With respect to Tubbs, it's absolutely right 8 that Cal Fire hasn't issued a report yet. And 9 10 plaintiffs have tried to walk back statements they've 11 made about whether Tubbs involves vegetation. And you 12 heard Mr. Simon say that's because we have more 13 discovery since the last conference. It's not 14 consistent with the statement they submitted this week. 15 If you look at page 2 of their submission, 16 they say that vegetation contact issues are common for all the fires, excluding Tubbs, Cascade, and Sulphur. 17 18 With respect --THE COURT: Do you have a contention about how 19 20 many ignition points there are for Tubbs? MR. ORSINI: All of the evidence that we've 21 22 seen thus far points to the fact that the Tubbs fire 23 began in the vicinity of 1128 Bennett Lane. 24 Now, there's more discovery to be done, but

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there have been ten depositions of eyewitnesses to the

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fire starting in Tubbs. No such depositions for Atlas.

We have body cam footage of police officers. We have first responders from Calistoga Fire Department and Cal Fire. We have satellite data. All of the evidence that exists today points to that origin point.

Now, that could change, just like the origin points for Atlas could change because there's a lot more discovery to occur.

But plaintiffs are asserting to Your Honor that Tubbs is much more complicated than Atlas. not our view and, obviously, Your Honor can't resolve that right not. That's what the trial is for. come back to that because at the end of the day that's the key consideration.

Now, with respect to access to evidence, again, respectfully, I think Mr. Kelly and Mr. Simon got it exactly backwards. We are further ahead in getting access to the Tubbs evidence than we are with respect to the Atlas evidence.

We don't have a report. That is true on The report is not admissible anyway.

What matters is being able to inspect the evidence itself. You heard Mr. Kelly say we haven't heard back from Napa -- the Napa County District Attorney with respect to Atlas and that is true.

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So we don't know as we stand here right now whether the Napa County District Attorney, which has taken the lead in the investigation of Atlas, will or will not permit us to inspect the Atlas evidence that Cal Fire has.

You also heard Mr. Kelly say with respect to Sonoma, which -- Sonoma, to all appearances in our interactions with them, they are our liaison for the Tubbs fire. They are the ones taking the lead in the investigation of the Tubbs fire from a district attorney criminal perspective.

They said to us yesterday they will have no objection to any arrangement we can make with Cal Fire to access the Tubbs evidence.

Now, if Cal Fire refuses to give access to Tubbs evidence, we will be in this courtroom very quickly because the privilege is a law enforcement privilege, and the investigating and prosecuting -potentially prosecuting district attorney has said they will not have an objection to all of us collectively accessing that evidence.

So it's just not true that Atlas is ahead of Tubbs in that regard. It's exactly backwards.

With respect to Sulphur, again, the assertions are we all know what happened in Sulphur. I don't.

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PG&E does not agree that the pole caused the fire. is not a simple case.

And with respect to Sulphur, again, let's say the pole did cause the fire. There's not a single other fire where there's any such allegation. Sulphur has, by our estimation, 2 percent of the total structures destroyed. It has zero percent of the total fatalities. It has 4 percent if the plaintiffs who have actually filed suit.

We have more than 3,000 individual plaintiffs in this litigation. There are 138 with respect to Sulphur. Sulphur has no chance of moving the needle. It's just not credible to suggest it does.

And one other point on that front, to address something that Mr. Singleton said, trying the Sulphur case first makes it less likely that the plaintiffs with respect to that fire get paid sooner than more likely.

Because if we go to that trial, we all know there are inevitably going to be appeals and we know those appeals are not going to be resolved for quite some time.

Whereas if we're able to move forward with a fire that actually does move the needle to resolution, Tubbs, that resolution is far more likely to happen before those appeals can run.

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THE COURT: Do you think -- and the plaintiffs will have a chance to comment on this, too -- is the dispute here based on something that we're not talking about, which is that PG&E thinks it has a better shot at winning the Tubbs and the plaintiffs think they have a better shot at winning Atlas?

MR. ORSINI: I think it would be hard for anybody here not to draw that conclusion, Your Honor.

THE COURT: You don't have to say anything more.

MR. ORSINI: But I think that's exactly the point, actually. I'm glad Your Honor asked the question.

I think that's exactly the point because we can't ultimately know. There are all these arguments about was Tubbs vegetation, was Tubbs one point or multiple points, was Tubbs something that involved maybe vegetation happening in one place and starting a fire in another place? That's what a trial is for, right? A trial will resolve those issues.

And from PG&E's perspective, facing the specter of all of these many cases with all of these different fires, we can't figure out how to resolve these until we have some visibility into what the

resolution is going to be of the Tubbs case. 1 2 THE COURT: Thank you. MR. ORSINI: And two other quick points, 3 Your Honor, with respect to discovery. 4 With respect to discovery, I do think we need 5 a global discovery cutoff. I think with respect to the 6 corporate-level discovery, we have proposed March 1st. 7 If the concern is they want a couple more weeks once 8 9 they have the ESI, that's fine. 10 Obviously, if they discover something after 11 the fact that requires them to reopen a request, that 12 always happens, right --13 THE COURT: When do you think you will finish producing the things that you are currently under an 14 15 obligation to produce? 16 MR. ORSINI: As we said in the stipulation, 17 Your Honor, we're currently believing we'll get it done 18 sometime in early to mid-February. We're having a lot 19 of problems with backup tapes. 20 THE COURT: Okay. 21 MR. ORSINI: And I also think that discovery 22 cutoff, Your Honor, ought to apply to all of the fires as well, because to Your Honor's point, which I think is 23 24 the right point, we have to get these all on a track to 25 get managed, delaying the discovery specific to other

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fires, i.e., the one that's not set for trial, I think,
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     is more likely to drag this out.
               Let's get it done. We have a lot of
 3
     plaintiffs' lawyers. We have a lot of lawyers. We can
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     do that discovery simultaneously.
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               Our view is we should get it all done.
               THE COURT: Thank you very much.
               MR. ORSINI: Thank you, Your Honor.
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               THE COURT: Any brief response?
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               MR. KELLY: Yes, brief.
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               First of all, I am so grateful for PG&E's
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     benevolence, possibly giving us two weeks to review
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     things that are over 10 million pages.
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               And I think the Court recognizes that this
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     continues to be a moving target. Last time it was
16
     December. Now we skip January. Now we're in February.
17
     I think we ought to talk about a discovery cutoff when
18
     we get the darn discovery. We can come to you and
     discuss it.
19
20
               Number two, do plaintiffs want to set Atlas
21
     before Tubbs because they have a better shot at winning
22
     Atlas? Actually, I don't think that's a fair
2.3
     characterization. I think it's a fair question.
               We know the source of origin in Atlas without
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25
     dispute. You've seen today how little we agree on.
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Even a pole that fell over from woodpeckers, it wasn't the pole; it was something else.

The one thing we know about Atlas is that we have the okay of Cal Fire to deal with the DA. We don't have that in Tubbs. There was this long argument about us having it backward.

Here is what we know: Cal Fire is a law enforcement agency. They have the privilege. They have not agreed to make any Tubbs evidence available. we're going to approach a motion, we'll do a motion, but, for goodness sake, let's get that straight.

For the other fires, Cal Fire has said make a deal with the DA's. That's what we're doing. We don't have that agreement in Tubbs.

So for me, why do you want to set Atlas? Because we know something about it.

And the rest of this is just kind of shooting in the dark. I say this, you say that, it happened at the Zinc house, it didn't happen at the Zinc house. You know what we need? We need to see the physical evidence. That way we don't characterize what a witness saw.

When I was a very baby lawyer, two things, the first is I was always told the physical evidence isn't on anybody's side. We need to see the physical

evidence.

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Second, counsel suggests that we only move the needle if we try the case. I'm so darn old I was here when we had discovery reforms in the late 1960s. truth of the matter is discovery is about each side getting sufficient information to evaluate their risk and the likelihood of success.

We don't have any discovery on Tubbs and we have no quarantee from the law enforcement agencies we're going to get it.

> THE COURT: Thank you.

MR. SINGLETON: Your Honor --

No. I really need to move on to THE COURT: the other issues. We have a number of other issues to cover in the next few minutes.

I want to talk about location next. I don't think the location issues depend on whether Tubbs or Atlas or Sulphur goes first, but if you think that's true, let me know.

Here are my concerns. San Francisco, it strikes me, is much easier to get a jury and it's probably much more convenient for the people in this room. It's not more convenient for the plaintiffs in the sense that I think there will be a lot of interest in the case and people will want to attend. Most of

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those people are in the North Bay counties. So San Francisco is probably much more convenient.

The North Bay counties, there's more interest and there is sort of a -- I think of it as almost a moral impetus to try to have a jury trial in the location where things happened, and I understand the interest that the plaintiffs themselves, maybe not their attorneys, but the plaintiffs themselves might have.

I think it will be much more difficult to get a jury there. I think jury selection in the North Bay counties would be extremely difficult.

I queried why it is that PG&E really wants to have a jury trial up there. Generally speaking -- I'm not talking about this case, but generally speaking, the defendants want out of the county where things like this happen, so I'm not sure what's going on there.

After I listened briefly to the attorneys on their views, if you have more to say than is in the written document, my plan is to at least touch base with the presiding judges of Napa and Sonoma Counties to get their, perhaps, visceral reaction to the ability of those courts to actually handle any of these cases and to get their views as to whether or not they think there would be an enormous burden in selecting a jury and any other things that you think I might touch base with them

CALIFORNIA NORTH BAY FIRE CASES 1 on. 2 If you think there are other topics I should discuss with them, I need to make a note of that as 3 That's my thought, to do that before I select a 4 location. 5 In a few minutes -- we have about four or five 6 other topics to talk about. A topic about three lines 7 down, there is the fact that -- I will just alert it to 8 you right now, which is that this particular department, 9 10 304, is not available until the late summer of 2020 for 11 a trial, so if we are going to have trials in San 12 Francisco, it's unlikely that they will be in this 13 department. 14 The parties are in general agreement, August/September time frame, roughly, something around 15 16 in there, but the trial calendar in this department is 17 occupied until the early fall of 2020. 18 So let's just have a few comments on the 19 location first, the location issue. If there is 20 anything else I should know about that. 21 Thank you. 22 Sir. 23 MR. PITRE: Good morning, Your Honor, Frank 24 I'll make this simple. We agree with the Court. Petri.

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THE COURT:

Okay. I'll take that as a yes.

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MR. ORSINI: I guess that puts me in the position of having to disagree with the Court.

I actually don't with respect to the critical point you made, Your Honor, which is there's almost a moral impetus to have the cases tried where the events occurred. And you're absolutely right, Your Honor, that you would usually expect me to stand up here and be taking their position and theirs would be taking ours.

THE COURT: You want to have this trial in North Carolina?

MR. ORSINI: I'll reserve comment on North Carolina.

Let me explain to Your Honor why we think that's important. Because we have looked at what the relevant facts are, we've looked at the issues that we believe are going to be critical to the resolution of any of these cases, and we have concluded strongly that our best chance to get a fair trial and to get a trial that leads to the proper result requires a jury who has some familiarity with the issues.

These are -- I'm from New York. We all know that, so I don't live in San Francisco or in one of the North Bay counties, but I've spent enough time here to know that San Francisco is different than the North Bay counties in ways that are very significant with respect

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to these fires: What the vegetation issues are up there, what the weather issues are up there, what the fire experiences have been up there.

One of the critical arguments that plaintiffs have presented since they filed their first complaint is PG&E could have avoided all of this by just turning the power off on October 7th.

Well, we've seen the news even out in New York about the de-energization that occurred in the last ten days or so, which has been a very difficult topic for a lot of people because you have to balance two different safety concerns, the safety risk of leaving the power on and potentially having a fire started --

THE COURT: So is it your view that the folks in the North Bay come to this case knowing a lot more about it than somebody from San Francisco and that we should -- those are the people that we're going to keep on the jury?

When jury trials started, that's actually the way things were done. We would pick people who knew all about the case. Those would be the people we would have on the jury -- this is England before the United States commenced. We would actually pick people who knew everything that there was to know about the case and we'd put them on the jury.

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And somehow we've changed. In the United States, now we kick those people off, right? How much do you know about this? Do you have a feeling about the impact of power surges and loss of energy? Do you have a sense of this? Do you know how -- we actually tend to boot those people and we get 12 people who are completely ignorant and we use them as a jury.

So where does your plan sort of fit in with the way things are done?

MR. ORSINI: So I think there's a spectrum here, Your Honor. We'd obviously boot someone who saw the fire start. We'd boot someone whose brother's house burned down, right, but we have, in Sonoma alone a half a million residents.

And our view is it's not having familiarity with the facts of the specific fire; it's knowing their community. It's their community that was impacted. There are claims here for punitive damages that are designed to effect change in how PG&E goes about doing its job of delivering safe and reliable power.

Who's going to be affected by that? people who live in those communities.

And we believe that it is very important for PG&E's actions and statements about what PG&E's actions ought to be going forward to be judged by the people who

have been and will be affected by those actions. 1 2 That's our view, Your Honor. 3 THE COURT: I appreciate that. Thank you. Let me turn to the next topic, which is if 4 there's anything more to say on the types of plaintiffs 5 that we're looking for. There's a little bit of a 6 dispute. I'm not sure there's more to say about it at this particular point and I don't think we have to 8 9 resolve it right away. 10 But for example, plaintiffs have suggested we'd want to have wineries and non-wineries involved. 11 12 PG&E thinks that's not appropriate because business loss 13 is complicated. My tentative view is it's not that 14 complicated. Maybe you have a witness on each side 15 talking about business losses. 16 PG&E has suggested another criteria, what they 17 call annoyance damages, people who have been affected by 18 soot and air but without any other serious property 19 damages. 20 If anybody has a comment that I won't find in 21 the written document I am happy to hear that. 22 MR. KELLY: I don't think we object to adding 23 such a person, Your Honor. 24 THE COURT: Okay. 25 With respect to trial dates, I've already said

really what I want to say about that. I don't know what 1 2 there is that you can say unless you can settle some of these cases that have been set in this department, 3 there's not much you can do. 4 But to the extent that the cases are in San 5 6 Francisco, my plan is to talk to my presiding judge and 7 get permission to have those come out of Department 206. 8

I don't think anybody wants to wait until 2020 to get these cases. That's a delay of almost -- about a year past the time period that both sides are in general agreement, so I'm seeing affirmative nods of the head and I'll just pass by that for now.

MR. ORSINI: Can I just make one comment, Your Honor, very briefly?

THE COURT: Of course.

MR. ORSINI: While we would prefer for Your Honor to preside over the trial, 2020 is a long time away.

THE COURT: Right.

MR. ORSINI: Our view is if Your Honor does ultimately keep the trials here or if you send them to Sonoma or Napa, our one view is that Your Honor, working with the presiding judge here or there, would have the authority to designate in advance who the trial judge will be, rather than waiting for the standard you find

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     out the morning you report for trial.
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               Our view is that type of approach would be far
     more conducive to getting a really streamlined trial
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     prepared and would help in a case of this complexity.
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               THE COURT: I think you're absolutely right.
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     Thank you.
 7
               There are apparently -- with respect to the
     plaintiffs' submissions of damages information, I know
 8
 9
     there's a representative from the Singleton law firm
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     here and maybe, hopefully, from the Frantz Law Group as
11
            I'd invite attorneys from those two entities to
12
     let me know what the status is.
13
               MR. SINGLETON: Certainly, Your Honor.
               As we put in our papers, we provided responses
14
15
     to, I think, 760.
16
               THE COURT:
                           Right.
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               MR. SINGLETON:
                               There were roughly 17 for whom
18
     we could not provide responses. We couldn't get in
     touch with them. We've dismissed them without
19
20
     prejudice, so there are now zero that we have not
21
     provided responses to.
22
               THE COURT:
                           Thank you.
23
               And is there a representative of the Frantz
24
     Law Group here?
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               MR. McNICHOLAS: Your Honor, this is Patrick
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McNicholas.
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               THE COURT:
                           If you could state your -- sir,
 3
     hold on just one second.
               Please state your name one more time slowly
 4
     and then go ahead.
 5
               MR. McNICHOLAS: McNicholas & McNicholas.
 6
 7
     We're with the Frantz Law Group.
               THE COURT: Could you start again, please?
 8
 9
               Could you please start again?
10
               We cannot hear you very well. Speak very
11
     slowly, please, as you state your name.
12
               MR. McNICHOLAS: This is Patrick McNicholas
13
     from McNicholas & McNicholas.
               MR. FRANTZ: James Frantz from the Frantz Law
14
15
     Group.
16
               THE COURT:
                           Thank you.
17
               Mr. Frantz, could you tell us what your status
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     is?
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               MR. FRANTZ: My status?
                           The status of your plaintiffs;
2.0
               THE COURT:
21
     have they provided the damages information? Are any of
22
     them out of compliance?
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               MR. FRANTZ: Regina Bagdasarian of my office
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     is here and she's handling that component of the CMO.
25
               Regina, if you want to speak to that.
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               MS. BAGDASARIAN:
                                 Yes, Your Honor.
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               We have submitted the vast majority of
     plaintiffs' information with regard to the evidence as
 3
     to what they saw in the fires. We have a few of them
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     that we're still following up with, and we expect to be
     complete very shortly.
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 7
               THE COURT: How many are you following up
     with?
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               MS. BAGDASARIAN: I think there's about 70,
10
     and we've filed a total of 626 plaintiffs so far.
11
               THE COURT:
                           Seventy, seven-zero?
12
                                 Yes, Your Honor.
               MS. BAGDASARIAN:
               THE COURT: And when will it be done?
13
               MS. BAGDASARIAN: If we could have 30 days,
14
15
     I'm sure we could be complete with that. We've been
16
     calling them and following up with them regularly and
     we're just waiting on some return information.
17
18
               Some of them thought they had provided
19
     everything and had some missing component. We just want
2.0
     to make sure we're complete.
21
                           I appreciate that.
               THE COURT:
22
               Was there somebody else on the telephone who
2.3
     wanted to address this issue?
24
                         (No response.)
25
                           Apparently not.
               THE COURT:
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With respect to the continuing negotiations between -- at this point it's really the DA's; it's not so much Cal Fire, but it's really the DA's regarding referred fires.

I would really want those discussions to happen as fast as possible, and if a motion has to be brought, then let's bring it.

But I think you should invite the DA's to come in for informal conference with me. They may or may not They have a right to decline. That's fine.

But I'm available to talk, and we can have an informal off-the-record conference. Anybody who wants to come can come. It won't be on the telephone. will be an in-person meeting. We'll put the tables together and we'll sit around the table and we'll see if we can work something out, as I say, off the record.

But that might help sort of figure out exactly what the problems are and we might be able to work that out, so that's an available approach.

With respect to the mediators, I'm glad people are looking at folks. I don't know if there's a conflict between what the individual plaintiffs are thinking of. There was one reference to Justice Trotter, and I know a number of people in this room have had experience with Justice Trotter; and then also Judge

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Daniel Weinstein and Mr. Mayer, who have also been
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     indicated. So I'm not going to speak any more about
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     that.
               I also see that Judge Vaughn Walker has been
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     suggested as somebody who could help with respect to the
 5
     subrogation plaintiffs.
 6
               These mediations have to occur before trial
 7
     and, hopefully, sufficiently, substantially before trial
 8
     so you're actually saving time and effort and money if
 9
10
     the mediations work out, but we can take that up at some
11
     other point.
12
               Let's go off the record and pick the next CMC
13
     date.
14
                 (Discussion off the record.)
15
               THE COURT: Back on the record.
16
               The next CMC is set for January 25th between
     9:00 and 11:00 a.m.
17
18
               I'll get an order out within the next few
     days, a few business days.
19
20
               Thank you for coming in. It's good to see
21
     everybody.
22
       (Whereupon, proceedings adjourned at 10:17 a.m.)
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1	State of California)
2	County of San Francisco)
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4	
5	I, Mary Ann Scanlan, California Certified Shorthand
6	Reporter No. 8875, do hereby certify:
7	That I was present at the time of the above
8	proceedings;
9	That I took down in machine shorthand notes all
10	proceedings had and testimony given;
11	That I thereafter transcribed said shorthand notes
12	with the aid of a computer;
13	That the above and foregoing is a full, true, and
14	correct transcription of said shorthand notes, and a
15	full, true and correct transcript of all proceedings had
16	and testimony taken;
17	That I am not a party to the action or related to a
18	party or counsel;
19	That I have no financial or other interest in the
20	outcome of the action.
21	
22	Dated: October 29, 2018
23	Mh D
24	MARY ANN SCANLAN CSR No. 8875
25	PART AND CANDA COR NO. 0075

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